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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4602

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CONTRACTING AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TAX AND FINANCE

April 7, 2009

The Honorable B.J. Penn
Acting Secretary of the Navy
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350
Dear Secretary Penn,

We write to recommend that the Navy not include funds in the fiscal year 2010 budget request to implement the Navy's Record of Decision (ROD) on the homeporting of additional ships at Naval Station (NAVSTA) Mayport, Florida.

It is our understanding that the Administration has initiated a comprehensive review of the nation's defense budget, military force structure, and national security strategy. Much of this review will ultimately be conducted through the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) process, which will be completed in early 2010. Based upon initial reports of these efforts, we believe that significant changes to national defense strategy and force structure should be fully considered before expending as much as \$1 billion to expand infrastructure at NAVSTA Mayport.

We also note that many questions about the Navy's decision to expand NAVSTA Mayport to accommodate a nuclear aircraft carrier remain unanswered, including the following:


- What is the strategic imperative for establishing another nuclear carrier-capable homeport when four already exist? Would the combatant command and the region benefit more if amphibious landing ships, littoral combat ships, and other smaller combatants were based at NAVSTA Mayport instead of a nuclear carrier, particularly when such a basing decision would cost significantly less?
- Considering that the Navy has had only one nuclear carrier homeport on the east coast since the advent of the nuclear aircraft carrier, a period that included the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and eight years of post-9/11 conflict, what has changed to require such a significant expenditure to establish a second nuclear carrier-capable port on the east coast?
- In fiscal year 2009, the Navy reported unfunded requirements in excess of \$4.5 billion. Does building additional infrastructure at NAVSTA Mayport rank ahead of these needs? Considering the reported Navy strike fighter shortfall of 125 or more aircraft by 2017, would it make more strategic sense to expend funds on buying down the gap than making the infrastructure investment contemplated for NAVSTA Mayport?

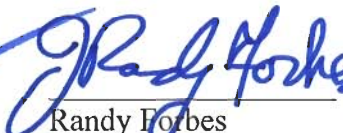
- The ROD referenced risk mitigation in justifying the decision to make NAVSTA Mayport a nuclear aircraft carrier homeport, but there has been no meaningful analysis or report to support this position. What analysis occurred to determine the risk of a catastrophic event and acceptable risk thresholds?
- If the Navy reduces the size of the nuclear carrier fleet, does the Navy still believe that NAVSTA Mayport should be expanded to accommodate a nuclear carrier?
- Admiral Jim Stavridis, commander of U.S. Southern Command, testified before the House Armed Services Committee that he had no role and was not consulted on the Navy's decision to homeport a nuclear carrier at NAVSTA Mayport. He also testified that his needs were more likely vessels such as frigates, large deck amphibious ships, hospital ships, and fast littoral craft than an aircraft carrier. Considering the proximity of NAVSTA Mayport to SOUTHCOM's area of responsibility, why were the needs of the relevant combatant commander not considered in the decision process?
- Why did the Navy not consider the impacts on the environment that would result from increased training and operating activities in the areas outside of NAVSTA Mayport? Why did the Navy carry out environmental impact studies that utilize inflated figures for ship and personnel presence as the "baseline" for determining impacts to the environment, thereby minimizing the effects of the decision?

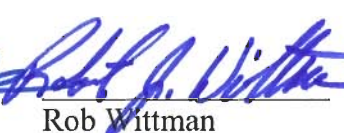
In light of such unanswered questions, and the Administration's ongoing review of national security strategy, budgets, and force requirements, we wish to inform you that we will oppose any request for funds in the fiscal year 2010 budget to implement the Navy's ROD on homeporting of ships at NAVSTA Mayport, including for dredging, construction, and planning and design purposes.


Although we respect the prerogative of the Administration to craft and submit an annual budget request, we also believe it important that you understand our position on this matter before dedicating a significant portion of the Navy's military construction budget request for efforts to homeport a nuclear aircraft carrier at NAVSTA Mayport.


Respectfully yours,



Glenn Nye
Member of Congress

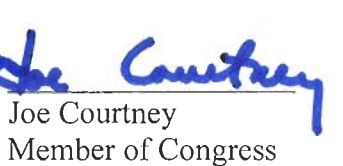

Randy Forbes
Member of Congress

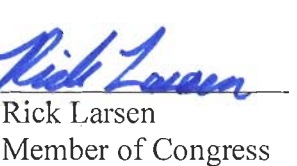

Rob Wittman
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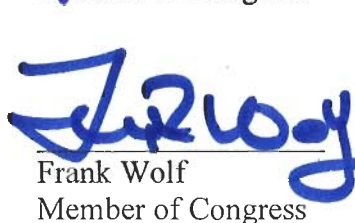

Robert Scott
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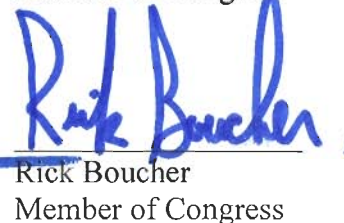

Jim Moran
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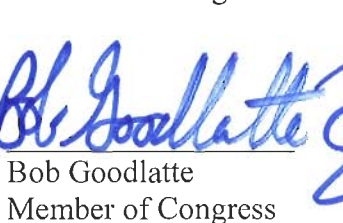

Eric Massa
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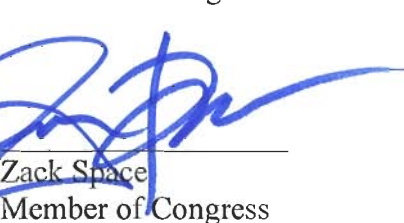

Joe Courtney
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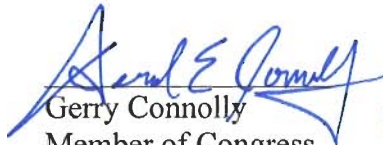

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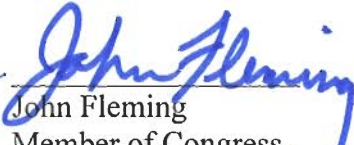

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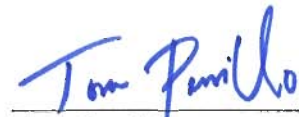
Martin Heinrich
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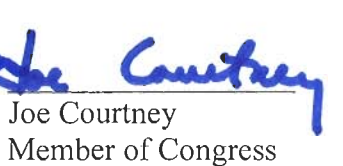

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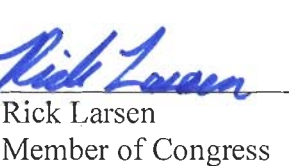

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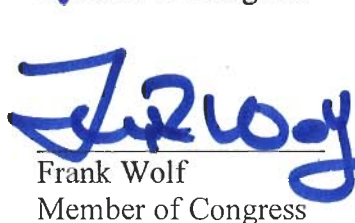

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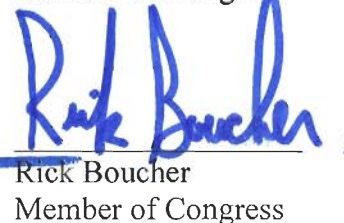

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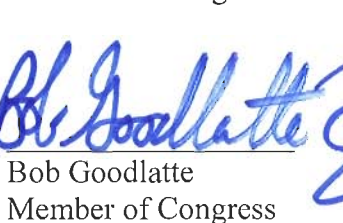

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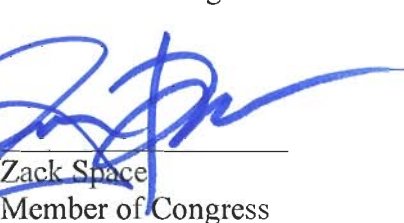

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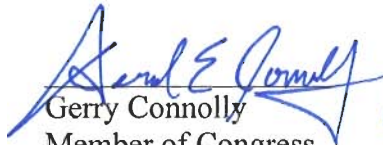
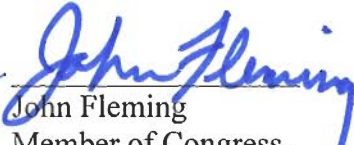
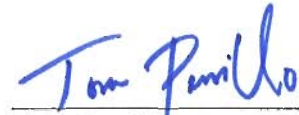

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